

## ArizonaSERVES Task Force

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Friday, November 16, 2012, 10:00 a.m. – Noon  
Executive Tower, 8th Floor Conference Room  
1700 W. Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85007

### Minutes

#### I. Welcome & Introductions

**Clarence H. Carter**

**Director, Department of Economic Security**

Director Carter opened the meeting by encouraging Task Force members and guests to attend one of the Adoption Day events occurring in November. Yuma, Yavapai and Maricopa County events are happening in the next couple of days.

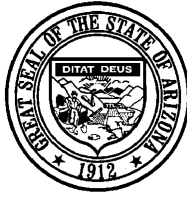
Director Carter welcomed two new members to the ArizonaSERVES Task Force. Betty Lynch and Sofia Tobar were attending their first meeting. Their contact information is in the member packet. Director Carter then spoke of ArizonaSERVES and his support of this model which is "to organize the energy of the faith and broader communities around the pressing issues we face in Arizona." ArizonaSERVES is much different than previous government attempts to engage the faith community, which were more about inclusion of faith organizations in federal funding opportunities. In his twenty months in Arizona, Director Carter has come to recognize the faith community's commitment to service and believes the "ground is fertile" for cross-sector partnerships for solving the big issues in Arizona.

He then acknowledged the great work being done by Task Force member Mark Upton and his organization, Christian Family Care. Director Carter recently attended CFC's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration which included a showing of their play "A Life Connected." This live drama focuses on the lives of four different children in the foster care system, their fragility and the challenges they faced. These children have been interrupted during the most important time in their lives. Mark thanked Director Carter, and shared the community's appreciation for his leadership regarding foster care and adoption.

Director Carter spoke about a recent DES executive leadership planning session where the building out of the DES Office of Faith and Community was launched. The foundation of this Office is the belief that government is not the principal problem solver in our community, but it is an important piece of it. This will be an externally-facing effort with the purpose of growing the capacity of the community. Look for more news regarding the development of this Office in the coming months.

Director Carter ended his opening remarks by speaking of his visit with Rev. Stephen Harris, the Superintendent of the Arizona District of Assemblies of God Churches. Together they will develop a video for use in the 230 AoG churches throughout Arizona that calls them to the issues surrounding children and families in the foster care and adoption systems.

#### II. Review and Action – September 21, 2012 Task Force Meeting Minutes



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Director Carter received a motion to approve the September 21, 2012 Task Force Meeting Minutes from Russ Dickey, and a second by Susan Corsaro-Johnson. Motion carried unanimously.

### III. Staff Report

Director Carter congratulated Jamie Bennett on her new responsibilities as the head of Governor Brewer's Human Services work.

Jamie Bennett thanked Task Force members for their efforts regarding Child Welfare Issues and other Issue Areas within ArizonaSERVES; for their dedication to service and their willingness to represent Governor Brewer regarding ArizonaSERVES in their communities. She also thanked those visiting today's meeting for their service to Arizonans in need.

Chuck Fitzgerald briefed Task Force members and visitors regarding several new projects.

1. Chuck spoke about the Children's Heart Gallery. This Gallery is a mobile display of children in foster care who are awaiting adoptive homes. A professional photo session for some of these children took place in late September at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix; a second shoot will take place at Loews Ventana Canyon Resort in Tucson in early December. The Gallery will be officially launched in February 2013; it will also be available on-line at [www.childrensheartgallery.org](http://www.childrensheartgallery.org). This project is a direct result of ArizonaSERVES.
2. Chuck also spoke about another project – "Arizona Blue Ribbon – Celebrating Foster Families" event scheduled for May 11, 2013 at Chase Field in Phoenix. A planning team has been meeting to discuss the details of the event. An update will be provided at the January ArizonaSERVES Task Force meeting. Details will also be available at [www.arizonablueribbon.org](http://www.arizonablueribbon.org) in the near future. This project is a direct result of ArizonaSERVES.
3. A third project update provided, relates to providing support for young adults who have "aged-out" of the foster care system. The Open Table, [www.theopentable.org](http://www.theopentable.org), has developed a model for these young adults. Task Force member Judith Fritsch is helping Open Table to further develop this capacity in Arizona. This project is a direct result of ArizonaSERVES.
4. The West Valley Human Services Alliance is convening a one day free summit on March 8, 2013 titled, "Strengthening Family Caregivers." This event will focus on providing good connection and navigation points for family caregivers in the western portion of Maricopa County. Registration will open in January at [www.wvhsa.acfbc.org](http://www.wvhsa.acfbc.org). This effort supports the ArizonaSERVES issue area of Elder Independence. This project is a direct result of ArizonaSERVES.

### IV. Foster Care Review Board

**Steve Lazere**  
**State Program Manager**

Steve Lazere spoke to attendees about Arizona's Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) Program which was established by legislative action to provide a check and balance in the Child Welfare system. There are 110 FCRBs in Arizona; all staffed with volunteers. There is always



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a need for more volunteers. More volunteer information is available at [www.azfcrb.org](http://www.azfcrb.org); or call 602-452-3400 or 866-320-1959 if you reside in Apache, Mohave, Coconino, Navajo, Yavapai, La Paz or Maricopa County; or call 520-388-4300 or 866-558-1791 if you reside in Cochise, Pinal, Yuma, Pima, Gila, Graham, Greenlee or Santa Cruz County.

Steve walked attendees through the enclosed Presentation and Fact Sheet.

Director Carter encouraged Task Force members to talk to their communities about the need for volunteers in FCRBs statewide.

### V. Community Initiatives

1. Ryan Holmstedt and Kristen Leetz, Arizona Diamondbacks employees, spoke about their Volunteer League Project – Fostering Hope. The Fostering Hope project team, [www.facebook.com/fosteringhopeaz](https://www.facebook.com/fosteringhopeaz), is focused on Arizona's children in foster care by working in four areas: 1) raising awareness for the needs of children in foster care, 2) renovation of family visitation rooms in a local CPS office, 3) mentoring children in foster care, 4) raising funds to do these first three.

The Fostering Hope team broke a world record by connecting more than 28,000 paper dolls together in one continuous chain. The dolls were used to raise awareness for the needs of children in foster care and the great need for more foster and adoptive homes. The doll initiative received national media recognition and has created a foster care awareness buzz around Major League Baseball.

The South Mountain CPS Office in Phoenix received an extreme makeover of their family visitation rooms thanks to the Fostering Hope Team.

Perhaps most importantly, the Fostering Hope team members have each developed personal relationships by mentoring 20 teenagers who are in foster care and receiving support from Aid to Adoption of Special Kids, [www.aask-az.org](http://www.aask-az.org)

Ryan spoke about how important community involvement is for the senior executives of the Arizona Diamondbacks, and how they are confident their example will encourage others in the business community to participate more deeply. The Fostering Hope project can find its roots in the efforts of ArizonaSERVES.

Director Carter thanked Ryan, Kristen and the entire Fostering Hope team for their commitment to Arizona's children in foster care.

2. Neil Saez and Kayla Torry, ASU students, spoke about Camp H.O.P.E. - a group of ASU undergraduates, dedicated to seeing underprivileged children in Phoenix and abroad, become passionate about learning.

Neil led attendees through a presentation that explained how Camp HOPE began with the idea that university students with drive could inspire the same in others, specifically in a group that have few other sources of inspiration: orphans. In the near future, the presentation can be seen here: <http://camp4hope.org/media>.

Forty university students are active in Camp HOPE with nearly two hundred in their larger community; all looking to make an impact in the lives of children in foster care.



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Community support is needed in the form of publicity/awareness, access to foster families, and a fun space to hold the Camp. If you can help this group of young adults in their mission, please contact them through <http://camp4hope.org>.

Director Carter offered DES video production capabilities to Camp HOPE for raising community awareness.

3. Heights Church in Prescott, Arizona has partnered with the local CPS Office and Yavapai County foster care agencies to provide a foster care awareness seminar in their community. This is not completely unique, however the video they put together to tell the foster care story in the community is. It was very well done by the Heights Church technical/video team. The short video was shared with attendees.

### VI. Call to the Public

### VII. Closing Statements and Adjourn

Billy Thrall brought a pile of ArizonaSERVES tee shirts for the taking by Task Force members and other attendees. These shirts were provided free of charge by OpportuniTees, a social enterprise founded by Neighborhood Ministries [www.opportunitees.com](http://www.opportunitees.com).

Next ArizonaSERVES Task Force meeting is January 18, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Chuck Fitzgerald  
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Office of Faith and Community  
[cfitzgerald@azdes.gov](mailto:cfitzgerald@azdes.gov)

### Attachments

- ArizonaSERVES and Children
- Staff Report
- Foster Care Review Board Presentation and Fact Sheet
- 2013 Meeting Schedule